French Language Services of the Government of Yukon

Annual Report 2004-2005

Introduction

This report is based on government records and activity reports from individual departments and constitutes the activity report of the Bureau of French Language Services (BFLS) for the 2004-2005 agreement extension as defined in section 6.2 of the *Canada-Yukon Funding Agreement on the Development, Enhancement and Implementation of French Language Rights and Services.*

DELIVERY OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES IN THE YUKON

Consultation

The Department of Highways and Public Works, through BFLS, co-ordinates in various ways the consultation process between the Government of Yukon and the francophone community.

Committees

Working Committee on French Language Services

The Working Committee on French Language Services consists of 2 representatives from both the Association franco-yukonnaise (AFY) and BFLS, including the executive director of AFY and the director of BFLS. Meetings must include the latter two. The committee has been meeting bi-weekly to deal with issues related to French language services.

Interdepartmental Committee on French Language Services

The Interdepartmental Committee on French Language Services meets regularly to discuss services offered by government departments and agencies, as well as budgeting and long-range planning. All departments and agencies are represented on this committee.

Complaint reporting and resolution

Anyone with a complaint regarding the delivery of French language services or the absence of a service can contact BFLS. BFLS then communicates with the service provider and works out an appropriate remedy to rectify the situation within a reasonable timeframe.

Priority areas

The Yukon Government, in close collaboration with the francophone community, has identified priority areas where direct French language services should be provided: communications, certain fields of education that are not covered under the *Canada-Yukon Agreement on Minority-Language Education and Second Official Language Instruction 2005-06 to 2008-09*, health, social services, justice, public safety, and economic development. In addition to the departments and agencies associated with these priority areas, other departments and agencies call upon these bilingual human resources to provide French language services. Departments that do not have bilingual staff use BFLS resources. All departments produce bilingual publications and ensure they have signs in public areas in both official languages.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2004-2005

Bureau of French Language Services

Funding and contribution

In addition to the core contribution of $1,350,000 for 2004-2005, the federal government has provided the territorial government with $100,000 for a special project and $90,000 for an auxiliary agreement.

During the 2004-2005 financial year, the Bureau managed a $90,000 auxiliary agreement with Canada to fund the Société des immeubles franco-yukonnais (SIFY) for the expansion of Le Centre de la francophonie. This project ensured the necessary space to continue to offer quality services to the growing francophone community.

This year was the second year of funding for the Website special project. An amount of $100,000 for the Bilingual Web Coordinator position helped to develop a stronger web presence in French within the Yukon Government. A significant amount of this special funding was used to purchase specialized software which ensures efficient management of the translation process. This project has proven to be very beneficial across all priority departments. The Internet is becoming increasingly used as a communications tool for government and as a result, requests for translation and web design are increasing significantly.

The Bureau has allocated $722,755 of the core contribution to meet objectives 2 and 3 of the funding agreement, namely consulting and communicating in French with the francophone community and evaluating French language services. The departments received $738,921 to support the provision of direct services to francophone clients as per objective 1.

Under objective 4 for the year 2004-2005, AFY received $120,000 to provide a range of services to the Yukon francophone community: information, consultation, evaluation, promotion and recreational and cultural services. And for objective 5, AFY received $10,000 to pursue their project in the context of economic independence. This year's project helped the community purchase tents for special events which they'll be able to rent in the future to other organizations.

The territorial government absorbed an excess expenditure of $241,676 due in part to ongoing costs incurred as a result of the 2001 administrative transfer to the Department of Highways and Public Works and the transfer in 2002 of the Adult French Language Training Centre from Education to BFLS.

Complaints

In 2004-2005, 25 complaints were made regarding the lack of availability of French language services. This represents a 100% increase compared to last year where 12 complaints were recorded. Most complaints concerned English only advertisements and lack of French health services.

All complaints were referred by BFLS to the departments and agencies concerned and corrective action was taken.

Interpretation

BFLS provided interpretation services on 7 occasions this year which represented a total of 8.25 hours. Since the departure in 2001 of its staff member who had been handling most of the interpretation requests, BFLS has not been able to find a translator/interpreter having the necessary training to take over and, thus, has been forced to curb the promotion of the service.

Education

As is usually the case every year, the Annual Report for the Canada – Yukon Agreement on Minority Language Education and Second Official Language Instruction 2004-2005 was translated by BFLS. As well this year, Education produced the Yukon Apprenticeship Brochure in French.

Justice

Court Services

A bilingual clerk provided various court and court-related services to Francophones. This year, the clerk answered 102 civil inquiries and 2 criminal inquiries in French as well as various other inquiries pertaining to legal questions.

Legislative Services

Two full-time bilingual legislative counsels drafted acts and regulations and provided legal opinions to other departments. All acts, regulations, ministerial orders and orders-in-council adopted in 2004-2005 were translated and produced in bilingual format, for a total of 20 statutes, 1 House Amendment, 220 regulations and orders-in-council, 17 ministerial orders, 2 orders from the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board and 747 miscellaneous documents.

The department also participates in an ongoing program funded by Justice Canada that has been set up to provide training in legal terminology for people in bilingual positions in the justice system.

This year the Maintenance Enforcement Information Kit as well as the Inmate Handbook were made available in French.

Health

Health and Social Services

- **Health Services Branch**

Again this year, two bilingual nurses at the Whitehorse Health Centre offered post-natal (postpartum) visits; adult immunization clinics, child health clinics; walk-in clinics for children, and group or individual prenatal classes in French. Appointments for foreign travel consultations and appointments for students on health related topics were also offered.

- **Social Services Branch**

A bilingual social worker is responsible for providing information support to clients who are receiving income support or social assistance, coordinating internal and external referral services in French to the community and, when necessary, acting as an interpreter during exchanges between francophones and the personnel of other divisions of the Department of Health and Social Services. A second social worker also provides bilingual services to parents who are involved with Family and Children's Services.

There was no funding available this year for the bilingual family support worker working with parents and tots even though the staff member continued to provide services.

The department produced a number of items in French including a Child Benefits brochure, Health Fair invitations, Flu posters, Disability Handbook, Social Assistance booklets, Child Care newsletters and various sexual health information. The **Yukon** Health Guide was widely distributed to the francophone community and received much positive feedback.

Yukon Hospital Corporation

A French language services coordinator provided minimal promotion and interpretation services at the Whitehorse General Hospital. As a member of the Client Support Team, the coordinator ensured a follow-up on complaints and also provided quality French services such as interpretation, research and personal support to francophone patients.

2004-2005 was the last year of funding from BFLS for this essential service as it is expected that Health Canada will respond to Yukon's action plan to fund the provision of the devolved health services in French. It should be stated that in both the 1993 and 1997 Health Canada transfers to the Yukon Territory, no actual clause was included to address French language services specifically.

Economic Development

This fiscal year marked the return of Tourism's "Business" sector to a stand-alone department – Economic Development.

This year the department had the Yukon Film & Sound Incentive Program translated and is actively promoting the return of the Community Development Fund.

Communications

All government departments and agencies, including those associated with priority areas, produce bilingual materials such as publications, promotional campaigns, advertisements, signs and forms. French speaking staff provide services in French at key service points of the Government of Yukon Following are a few examples of what was accomplished in this regard during the fiscal year 2004-2005.

Tourism and Culture

The Department offers year-round bilingual services in the Visitor Reception Centre in Whitehorse and bilingual service in the Dawson City Visitor Reception Centre during the busy summer season. The Beringia Centre also employs bilingual interpretive guides throughout the year.

This year the department produced Historic Properties information in French, Arts Adventures brochures and a number of community walking tour brochures in French that were put on the website. A French Logo Standards guide was also developed and the Canyon City brochure was sent for reprint. Also two additional interpretive Begingia panels were created and another booklet entitled *Ta'an Kwäch'än: People of the Lake*. Moreover, the Yukon Archives produced an interesting brochure in French entitled *Unlock the Past*.

Community Services

French language services continue to be available for all driver and vehicle licensing services available through Motor Vehicles, and for information about all government programs and services, in person or by phone, through the Inquiry Centre.

A number of forms were made into bilingual format including the electrical inspection form. A Yukon Class 5 Road Test Guide and a Roundabout brochure were produced in French.

During 2004-2005, Public Libraries processed a total of 251 new French language items for Whitehorse Public Library and community libraries including 35 items in various audio-visual formats. 84 of these items were added to the non-fiction collection.

Although at this time there are no designated bilingual positions within Whitehorse Public Library, several staff are able to provide service to francophone patrons in their language.

The primary programming activity during 04/05 was the Family Literacy Day Fun Fair, a bilingual event co-sponsored with the Yukon Literacy Coalition and Service d'orientation et de formation aux adultes. 150 people attended this event at the end of January. Throughout the year, Whitehorse Public Library also offers library tours for French groups of all ages from pre-school to adult. These tours promote the library's collections and services and showcase materials of interest to the particular group.

Energy, Mines and Resources

Yukon's Department of Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR) is responsible for administering the branches of Oil and Gas, Business Development and Pipeline, Energy, Agriculture, Lands, Forestry, Minerals, the Yukon Geological Survey and Client Services and Inspections. The responsibility for Lands, Forestry and Minerals was devolved to the Yukon government in 2003. Although there was limited provision for translation costs in the devolution transfer agreement, EMR continues to provide bilingual services and information with the assistance of the Bureau of French Language Services.

The Canada-Yukon Agriculture Policy Framework Program Guide was translated as part of the partnership with Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. The translated French Program Guide will be made available on the web only.

EMR uses l'*Aurore boreale* regularly for advertising programs, public meetings, consultations and events to the francophone community.

Environment

Environment Yukon used the bulk of its budget allocation to produce public information materials in French including the Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Summaries, the Campgrounds brochure and Recycling Club Guide. New initiatives included production of French language versions of the Be Bear Aware – a children's colouring book, the Wildlife Viewing Guide, and a map of Yukon First Nation Traditional Territories.

As of April 1st, 2004, the Yukon's Wildlife Preserve (assets only) was purchased by the Yukon Government. Bilingual tours of the preserve are available.

Executive Council Office

The Executive Council Office has provided public information in French in the form of news releases, advertising and public information materials such as the Visions North newsletter and the premier's community tour information pamphlet.

Women's Directorate

This year's French related service consisted of various ads for inclusion in *L'Aurore boréale*, as well as *Love Doesn't Leave a Mark* brochure.

Legislative Assembly

The Legislative Assembly is responsible for conducting the elections of members of school councils and the trustees of the Yukon Francophone School Board. All public documents and advertising are available in French and English for these Yukon-wide elections.

Highways & Public Works

This year the department of Highways and Public Works advertised driving safety information and produced the 2005 edition of the *Driving Yukon Highways* brochure.

A bilingual coordinator at Queen's Printer ensures that the Guidelines for Advertising, Publishing and Other Forms of Communication in French are respected in government printing.

Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission (PSC) continues to place bilingual recruitment advertising in local and outside newspapers when recruiting for bilingual positions. The bilingual advertising is also placed on its employment Web site. The PSC produced an information brochure which describes their new branch, *Workplace Diversity Employment Office*.

The Public Service Commission's orientation sessions offered to interested employees and all new employees now include a presentation on French language services and responsibilities within Yukon Government. The Bureau created a brochure entitled Guidelines to French Language Services which is distributed at these sessions.

Yukon Development Corporation

The Yukon Development Corporation, in collaboration with Yukon Energy, co-sponsored summer student employees to provide interpretative services in French at the Whitehorse Fish Ladder in cooperation with the Yukon Fish and Game Association and for the Yukon Summer Walking Tours offered by the Yukon Conservation Society. The corporation also produced a number of Whitehorse Damn public safety signs.

Yukon Housing Corporation

The Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC) continues to assist francophone clients at the program and technical level with their housing needs. Some French advertising was done in *L'Aurore boréale* mainly for the Affordable Housing Program.

Yukon Liquor Corporation

During 2004-2005, the Yukon Liquor Corporation continued its regular public awareness and information program in French:

- Signage at selected public arenas and rinks encouraging social responsibility in the consumption of alcoholic beverages;
- Sponsoring rolling T.V. advertisements and notices within government publications (e.g. fishing and hunting guides) encouraging responsible behaviour in the use of alcohol in various recreational settings and activities;
- Encouraging responsible consumption of alcohol through notices within publications and brochures complementing various public events (e.g. music festivals, Rendezvous) held throughout Yukon; and
- Informing the public through newspapers throughout the year on various operational matters, such as changes in days and hours of customer service at liquor stores throughout Yukon.

CONCLUSION

Government departments and agencies are generally satisfied with the quality of service they receive from BFLS, as well as the services that they offer francophone clients with the help of BFLS.

It was also made evident from discussions during meetings of the Working Committee on French Language Services that, while things are not perfect and there is room for improvement in some areas, Yukon francophones are satisfied with the services they receive from the Yukon government except when it comes to Health services. We have been waiting for over two years for ratification of the agreement reached with Health Canada. At this point, the community is fast losing patience and if this issue is not settled soon, the community may launch a court case against the Federal and Territorial governments.

The website coordinator position has been in place for over a year now. The increased demand on resources and the huge growth in content were never envisioned when the last Canada-Yukon Funding Agreement was signed in 1999. The creation of the French Web Coordinator position has begun to address the shortfall. We have, however, come to realize that this is a huge undertaking and we will require additional funding, either through special projects or increases in our base budget to enable us to continue to translate and update government web sites.

An evaluation of the 1999-2004 Canada -Yukon Funding Agreement on the Development, Enhancement and Implementation of French Language Rights and Services was initiated in early 2004. Surveys were conducted in the French speaking community and within government. The evaluation will be completed in 2005-2006.

Statement of expenditures
for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2005

CORE CONTRIBUTION		BUDGETED $	ACTUAL $
1.	DIRECT SERVICES TO FRANCOPHONES		
a)	Salaries and benefits	556,713	531,477
b)	Operation and maintenance	172,953	207,444
	Subtotal	729,666	738,921
2.	CONSULTATION WITH THE FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY AND COMMUNICATION WITH FRANCOPHONES IN FRENCH		
a)	Salaries & benefits	535,818	528,370
b)	Operation and maintenance	145,100	190,885
	Subtotal	680,918	719,255
3.	EVALUATION OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SERVICES		
	Annual Report 2003-2004	3,500	3,500
4.	SERVICES TO FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY BY AFY		
	Funded projects	120,000	120,000
5.	ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF THE FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY		
	Specific activities	10,000	10,000
	TOTAL ALL OBJECTIVES:	1,544,084	1,591,676
PORTION OF EXPENSES COVERED BY THE CANADA-YUKON AGREEMENT			
	Core Contribution	1,350,000	1,350,000
PORTION OF EXPENSES ABSORBED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF YUKON		194,084	241,676